

As a consumer of digital content, I have a grave concern about the proposed Broadcast Flag. The initial comments of the MPAA and others aligned with its position ignore the consumer's side of the digital television bargain. This is troubling if the object of this proceeding is to convince consumers to buy digital television devices.

The MPAA would have the Commission believe that the DTV transition is best served by forcing consumers to receive DTV content only by means of special-purpose DTV devices. The truth is that general-purpose computers can do more while costing less.

The digital television transition relies on convincing consumers of the benefits of switching to and buying digital television equipment. That transition will be far more palatable to me as a consumer if switching doesn't mean discarding my existing home network, buying new high-resolutions displays, and finding room for yet another device in my living room. Please do not allow the MPAA and its allies to hinder the transition by making us set aside our computers and buy special-purpose DTV devices that are more expensive and less valuable.

In addition, I am very concerned about the fair-use implications of the broadcast flag. With today's technology, I can be more than a passive recipient of content; I can modify, create and participate. I can record TV to watch later; clip a small piece of TV and splice it into a home movie; send an email clip of my child's football game to a distant relative; or record a TV program onto a DVD and play it at my friend's apartment. The broadcast flag seems designed to remove this control and flexibility that I enjoy.

I am a law-abiding consumer who believes that piracy should be prevented and prosecuted. However, if theoretical prevention comes at the cost of prohibiting me from making legal, personal use of my content, then the FCC should be working to protect all consumers rather than enable those who would restrict consumer rights. In the case of the broadcast flag, it seems that it will have little effect on piracy. With file-sharing networks, a TV program has only to be cracked once, and it will propagate rapidly across the Internet. So, while I may be required to purchase consumer electronic devices that cost more and allow me to do less, piracy will not be diminished.

My own words.

The purpose of government throughout time is to provide laws to control the lawless.

Over the past 100 years, governments and regulator agencies have lost more and more

ground to corporate interests. They have biased the scales of law to their own interests.

I don't blame anyone for this. As demonstrated by Roosevelt, the Pennsylvanian Oil tycoon

& philanthropist, power corrupts and the corporations now have a lot of power.

The FCC needs to take a stronger stand on consumer rights. The MPAA is only doing what comes

naturally: getting all that it can. They would happily penalize ALL consumers in order to control

pirating. Consumers don't have the money to fight such giants on a point by point basis.

Please look toward establishing regulations allowing for "Fair Use"

FAIR USE will provide a framework of consumer rights. It would give consumers such rights as:
the right to timeshift their viewing (currently available through VCRs, but MPAA would block this)
the right to view material with equipment of our choice. The MPAA would have you lock us
into only using thier register & controlled equipment.

Overall, PC's & the internet are the source of the problem. They provide consumers with powers
that were unheard of just 15 years ago. They are changing the shape of our world. The entertainment
industry has had a very long, lucrative run since the dawn of audio and video recording. Prior to
that, people went out to listen and see real people. Now we only get media events prepackaged
for worldwide consumption.

I have no objection to paying a fair price for the artist, producer, production facilities etc.
I have serious objections when 80% of the cost of my entertainment goes to paying for
slick advertising campaigns and lawyers to protect thier interests.